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This is the first in a series of updates on the successes of the Kentucky Partnership Academies. For more information about the academies and the archive for past updates, visit <http://kypartnershipacademies.org>.

Washington County Schools & St. Catharine College

St. Catharine College & Washington County schools work together to increase college and career readiness. The result, an Early College Program where typically struggling students are out-performing their peer counterparts and in some cases, college freshmen.

In 2011, Saint Catharine College (SCC)—a small, private four-year liberal arts institution located in rural Saint Catharine, Kentucky—partnered with the Washington County School District (WCS) and Elizabethtown Community and Technical College (ECTC) to establish an early college program for Washington County High School students. Initially twenty-five (25) juniors from student populations that are typically under-represented at Kentucky's postsecondary institutions participated at the start of the program known as the Washington County Commander College.

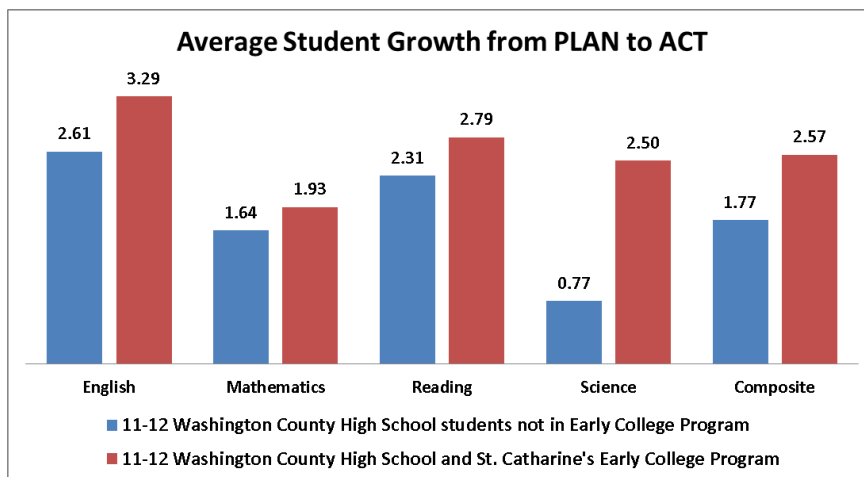


Figure 1 Data provided by Washington County Public Schools.

The Program

The first cohort of this two-year initiative has slowly moved juniors from dual credit classes scheduled and taught at WCHS, to full exposure and scheduling at the SCC campus by the completion of their senior year. Initially, the juniors moved as a cohort, but the seniors are slowly branching out with their electives as they work to attain an Associates degree in Liberal Arts. The first cohort experienced a Summer Bridge Program in Math at SCC to prepare them for College Math (their weakest area as a group). In addition, two one-credit classes have been offered in College Readiness during their senior year.

The Results

As shown above, participants in Commander College are scoring significant ACT gains in English, Mathematics, Science and Readingⁱ. But this isn't the only area where Commander College students are gaining ground on their counterparts.

Commander College students are achieving higher Grade Point Averages than their high school counterparts: 3.33 vs. 2.50 GPA's (2010-2011) and 2.96 vs. 2.34 GPA's (2011-2012). Additionally, these students miss fewer days of school. In 2010-2011, Commander College students were in school an average of 164.3 days while

nonparticipants were in school 163.6 days. In 2011-2012, the gap increased to 164 vs. 162.

The Future

Twelve students are on track to receive their degrees in May of 2013. The remaining students in the cohort have greatly increased the number of college credits they have earned and all are planning on a college career. A second cohort of juniors has started and includes students enrolled in an Associates degree in Early Childhood Education in addition to the Liberal Arts offering.

ⁱ For each content area – English, mathematics, reading, and science – Standards are provided for six score ranges along a scale common to EXPLORE (1-25), PLAN (1-32), and the ACT (1-36). Since the EPAS programs measure students' progressive academic development, the Standards are cumulative. That is, a student scoring in the 24-27 score range is likely able to demonstrate the skills associated with the 13-15, 16-19, and 20-23 score ranges as well. This enables EPAS to provide seamless data describing student achievement over time from grade 8 through 12.

Data provided by Washington County Schools. For more information about Washington County Commander College, contact Dr. Jan Lantz, St Catharine College (janlantz@scck.edu).

For other KY Partnerships, please visit <http://kypartnershipacademies.org> or contact Shannon Gilkey, CPE (shannon.gilkey@ky.gov).